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Sounds of Christmas

by Marilyn Adix, H. Ed. 2

*"... four collie birds, three French hens,
two turtle doves, and a partridge in a pear
tree. . . ."*

This familiar strain of an old New England folk song reflects some of the gaiety in the simple life of these pioneers. Although the New England colonists first settled on Massachusetts Bay nearly three centuries ago, you see reminders of them today in such treasures as "The Twelve Days of Christmas." It was once thought that the test of true love could be found in the number, variety and degree of difficulty in obtaining gifts for one another, which is the background of this holiday song.

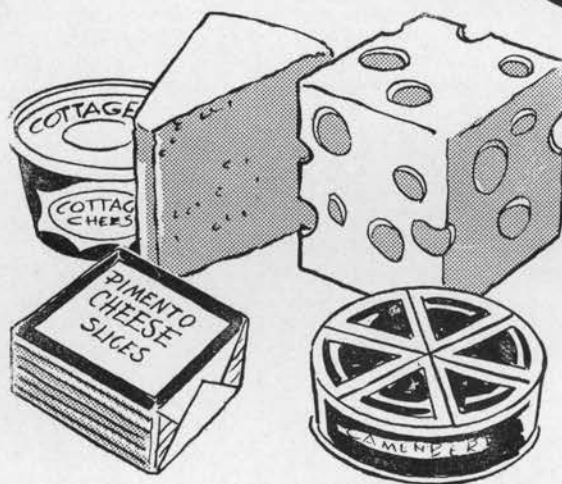
This song was the basis for a game in which a leader would repeat the first gift item and the followers, in turn, would have to recall in order each day's gifts as the game progressed or else present a forfeit to the winner.

As you sing or hear this gay song of love and gifts again this Christmas season, maybe you can shut your eyes and visualize these colorful New Englanders doing their happy folk dance to it.



The earliest known hymn in honor of the Nativity is "Jesus, Light of all the Nations," which, like the others up to the 13th Century, is quite solemn and strictly religious. The lighter and more informal carols such as "Ades-tes Fidelis" and "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" were introduced in Italy.

Santa shops **HERE** for



Gift Wrapped Cheeses

- Swiss
- Cheddar
- Bleu
- Edam
- Cottage

Dairy Industry Building

Salesroom